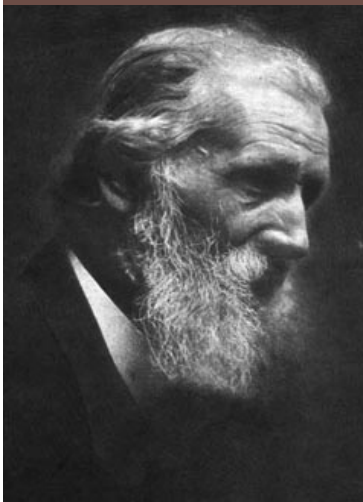


*Take a course in good water and air; and in the eternal youth of Nature you may renew your own. Go quietly, alone; no harm will befall you.*

—John Muir



The mission of the John Muir Association is to celebrate the life, share the vision, and preserve the legacy of John Muir through education, preservation, advocacy and stewardship, in partnership with the National Park Service at the John Muir National Historic Site.

## California Native Plant Garden a Community Effort

Volunteers have been digging the dirt on the John Muir National Historic Site, and the payoff for all of us is an innovative new landscape surrounding the visitor center. The California Native Plant Garden now under way will not only connect the visitor's experience to John Muir's life-long interest in native plants, it will inspire them to use native plants in their own gardens.

The project is the brainchild of Lucy Lawliss, the Resources Program Manager for the Site, and was designed by landscape architect Greg Wolford. The garden is made up of plant communities—such as the grasslands meadow, the Yosemite garden, and a woodland area. “Natives tell you where they belong, where they want to grow,” said Wolford. Having worked with natives almost exclusively in recent years for his business, Californica, he's perhaps become something of a “native plant whisperer.”

The plants used are readily available in nurseries, so visitors can apply what they learn while strolling the new garden. Native gardens have a lot of benefits, one of which is saving water. “After two years, we can turn off the irrigation here,” said Wolford. “Native plants can survive on their own after they're established.”



Greg Wolford crafting the garden design.

*“A native plant garden reflects harmony, something real, something you can be a part of.”*  
—Greg Wolford

Most of Phase I of the garden is finished, with plans to complete it next spring. This phase included a redesign of the area immediately surrounding the visitor center.

Tilling and amending the hard-as-rock soil, and reshaping the flat terrain was a dirty, tough job. Spray irrigation was replaced with drip irrigation to conserve water. Wandering gravel pathways will invite visitors to explore, enjoy and learn about the plants. Interpretative

*(Continued, next page)*



John Muir Association  
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Sherida Bush  
Judy Potter  
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Tom Zamaria

#### Our Partner

John Muir National Historic Site  
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www.nps.gov/jomu

Martha Lee, Superintendent

information will also be added next year to complete Phase I. Phase II will extend the garden north along Alhambra Avenue.

Many organizations and individuals have come together for this community effort, including the John Muir Association, the Friends of Alhambra Creek (who donated \$2,500), the Contra Costa Master Gardeners, the California Native Plant Society, and the National Park Service. Donations of native plants were received from Berkeley Horticultural Nursery, Watershed Nursery, the Diablo Valley College Adaptive Horticulture Department (grown by special needs students), and Annie's Annuals. The Urban Farmer has donated irrigation equipment. The family of Susan Holland has generously contributed donations made in her memory to the garden project (see article, page 5). To complete both phases, another \$25,000 in funding is needed.



Huckleberry



On your next visit to the John Muir NHS, plan to spend some time in the garden. You may enjoy some of the natives that become fragrant under the warm sun, such as white sage, coyote mint and yarrow. Better yet, help complete the garden by sending your gift to the John Muir Association. The new California Native Plant Garden will grow on you.

## Our Thanks to Richard Elliott

John Muir Association Board Member and Secretary Richard Elliott has left the board after eight years of invaluable work for JMA. Rich is the Artistic Director for both the Willows Theatre and the Campbell Theatre. Defining the artistic direction for two theatres has kept him very busy. Rich produced and directed the acclaimed musical, John Muir's Mountain Days, based on Muir's life. Rich has generously arranged for JMA's John Muir Conservation Award Dinner to be held at the Campbell Theatre on January 20 (see page 8). Rich will be missed, and we appreciate his hard work and insight on behalf of JMA.



Tom Zamaria



Igor Skaredoff

JMA brought the historic scow schooner, the Alma, to Martinez on October 14. The boat is the last of her kind, which were used to transport goods in the Bay Area. JMA Board Member Michael Muir delivered produce to the boat with his horse and carriage, symbolic of historic methods of transporting fresh produce.



# The Crowd Went "Wild" at the John Muir Birthday–Earth Day Celebration

A few sprinkles late in the afternoon did not dampen the festive mood of this year's John Muir Birthday–Earth Day Celebration on April 21. The lively event was enjoyed by 1,600 attendees at the John Muir National Historic Site. This year, activities were expanded and took place citywide, including a run, hike, kayak regatta and film festival.

exhibitors kept adults and children engaged, entertained and informed.

Many attendees had exhibitors stamp their programs to enter a drawing sponsored by JMA. The winner was Carol Kwan of Pleasant Hill, who won a National Parks Annual Pass.

The event's organizers were the John Muir Association, the National Park Service and the John Muir Festival Center. Appreciation goes to our sponsors: the Bay Area Air Quality Management District; Pyramid Breweries, Inc.; Costco; and Allied Waste.

Thanks also to you who came to celebrate a healthy future for the planet. Whether you attended or not, enjoy the wonderful photos

by Tom Zamaria and Judy Potter. And plan to join us for next year's John Muir Birthday–Earth Day Celebration on April 19, 2008.

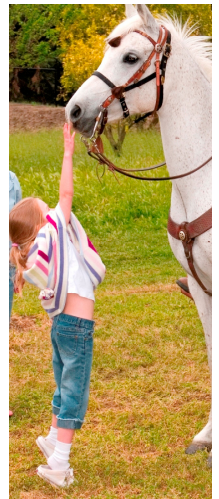


More than fifty descendants of John Muir came together for a family reunion, including great grandson Michael Muir, a John Muir Association

(JMA) Board Member. Music, activities and more than 50



Descendants of John Muir



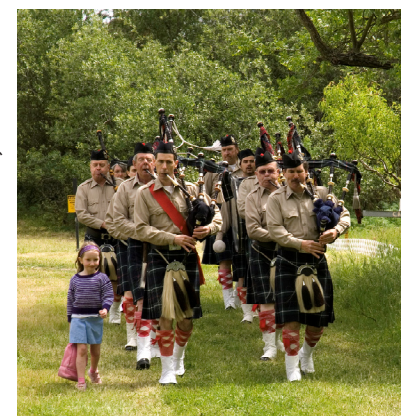
Senator Tom Torlakson hugs "John Muir"



John Muir, as portrayed by Frank Helling, greets former JMA Board Member Marc Murai. Marc recently moved to New Hampshire. We miss you, Marc!



Judy Potter



Judy Potter





## The View from the President's Window

By JoAnne Dunec

I'm delighted to let you know that there is a lot to catch up on since our last issue of *The View!* First, we have a new logo that focuses on John Muir and his legacy with respect to National Parks. An active mountaineer and explorer, he is featured high on a ridge contemplating his beloved Sierras, the "range of light." His contemplations led to passionate advocacy, in large part penned from his home in Martinez, which is part of the John Muir National Historic Site. From his second-floor "scribble den," John Muir changed the world. As a result of his writings and tireless advocacy, which instilled in a nation the need



to protect our treasured wilderness and areas of national significance, we enjoy our nation's great system of National Parks. We continue to work with the National Park Service to not only enhance John Muir's home site, but also his unparalleled legacy.

We have completed another John Muir Mountain Day Camp, and were at full capacity this year. Seventy children, led by our Camp Directors Jill Harcke and Susan Barry, enjoyed activities at the John Muir NHS. The children were also treated to outings with JMA Board Member Michael Muir and his magnificent horses. Environmental education of our youth is a priority for the National Park Service, as well as for JMA. Our collective goal is to inspire our youth with John Muir's life and legacy.

Many of you attended the John Muir Earth Day Celebration last April, and if you missed it, please put it on your calendar for next year—April 19, 2008. By all accounts it was a huge success! For the first time, the event was held not only in the Park, but also involved the City of Martinez and events in other locations. To add to the festivities, a segment of the Bay Area Ridge Trail within the John Muir NHS was dedicated on Mt. Wanda. Once again, we thank our event sponsors and all those who contributed to the day's success.

Please save the dates for our next two events. Join us Sunday, January 20 for the John Muir Conservation Award Dinner (see article, page 8). Also, plan to attend next year's John Muir Earth Day Celebration on Saturday, April 19, 2008.

## John Muir Mountain Day Camp Inspires a New Generation

"Where's the elderberry tree?" The group of children sprints to a berry-filled tree near the Martinez Adobe. Panting and wide eyed, they place their palms on the trunk. "Now, where's the redwood?" The children race toward the majestic tree. Within a matter of minutes, Frank Helling, a Park Service Ranger at Sequoia National Park, taught the children to identify several types of trees. For the kids, it was a fun, action-filled game.

For the fifth consecutive year, the John Muir Mountain Day Camp engaged children in activities that



instilled what Muir wrote about so enthusiastically—an appreciation for nature. The Camp is sponsored each year by the John Muir Association and the John Muir National Historic Site.

"While so many things today's children experience are electronic, this camp offers an opportunity for children to see the world the way John Muir saw it," said Camp Director Jill Harcke. "Each child becomes a botanist, artist, sourdough cook and naturalist all in one week."

Camp Director Sue Barry drew out the artist in every child. Harcke guided campers through the steps of

*(Continued, next page)*

IN MEMORIAM

**SUSAN HOLLAND, John Muir Association Board Member from March 1998 to December 2006**

We respectfully dedicate this issue of *The View* to Susan Holland, who passed away suddenly on May 22, 2007. Susan was a life-long friend of the John Muir National Historic Site. Having grown up in Martinez, Susan visited John Muir’s home often. It was always a great pleasure to hear Susan’s fond recollections of childhood activities in the park, and particularly in John Muir’s home. “She knew more about the house than anyone,” said her husband, Drew. Her dedication and love of John Muir and the park continued and she frequently brought her day care charges there to carry on her own childhood legacy. In March 1998, Susan was

elected to serve on the Board of the John Muir Association (then known as the John Muir Memorial Association). She was active in planning and



participating in Association events held in the park with the National Park Service. Due to her long familiarity

with the park, she engaged both members and prospective members with her enthusiasm for John Muir and his historic home.

Susan remained involved with the John Muir National Historic Site and was active with the Association until a few months ago, when she stepped down due to other pressing community activities. Her many years of dedicated service on the Board were invaluable.

Susan’s passion for the John Muir National Historic Site continued to the last as she requested that donations be made to the John Muir Association instead of flowers. As a result, many people within the community have contributed in Susan’s memory. As of this printing, we have received more than \$1,200 in Susan’s honor. Drew has confirmed that Susan desired any donations made in her honor be used to further the Association’s work at the park. The funds are supporting the California Native Plant Garden currently under construction in front of the visitor center (see article, page 1). If you would like to contribute to Susan’s legacy and share her passion for not only the park, but also John Muir, please send your donation to: John Muir Association, P.O. Box 2433, Martinez, CA 95443. Your contribution will help the Native Plant Garden flourish.



your children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews to join the Camp for a unique, unforgettable experience.



Jill Harcke (far left), Ross Hanna (above) and Frank Helling as John Muir (below, center)

baking their own bread with 138-year-old sourdough starter. Special guests also led activities, including Ross Hanna, John Muir’s grandson. Another guest was Helling, known for his lively portrayal of John Muir. Next summer, encourage







## Superintendent's View

By Martha Lee

*"All the wild world is beautiful, and it matters but little where we go ... So universally true is this, the spot where we chance to be always seems the best."*

—John Muir

I am writing this on a glorious, autumn day in the San Francisco Bay Area. As I swam backstroke in the pool early this morning, I watched clouds skitter across a deep blue sky and turkey vultures circle over yellow-brown, oat-dotted hills. In my head I was connected to other skies I have fallen into while swimming, be it in wild Sierra locales, exotic vacation spots, or even small urban parks.



Walking with my dog in my neighborhood yesterday, I was surprised by a flash of color – the blue and rust of a Western bluebird that landed on a tree just a few feet in front of me. Unexpectedly, the sight of that bird took my mind to a backpacking trip in Yosemite's high country many years ago and the feeling of joy I experienced then upon seeing the blue flash of some Mountain bluebirds. In the past couple of weeks, I have noted that the white pelicans have come back to the ponds along the Bay near my house and the figs are ripe in Muir's

orchards (I ate some right off the tree yesterday!).

For me, the world feels right when I can make regular connections to nature. The energy and restoration I feel through such brief encounters enable me to endure daily challenges like the traffic on East Bay freeways and long hours in windowless rooms in meetings.

Now that it is fall, we are delighted to welcome the school kids back to John Muir National Historic Site as they visit with their teachers and classmates. Through their visits to Muir's home, we hope to help them recognize nature's beauty in their own environment, inspire them to know their own power to preserve such beauty, and help them learn how to find respite and rejuvenation in nature's small, everyday gifts.

I appreciate the ongoing contributions and work of the members of the John Muir Association. Now, go out and experience some of our wild world yourselves!



John Muir National Historic Site

## David Blackburn Moves to Lowell National Historic Park

The John Muir Association Board Members bid farewell to National Park Service Ranger David Blackburn, who has moved on to a new post at the Lowell National Historic Park in Massachusetts. The JMA Board worked closely with David for our events and day-to-day planning, and feel the loss of his departure.



David worked at the John Muir NHS for fourteen years, and split his time among three other parks as well: the Eugene O'Neill NHS, Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Monument and Rosie the Riveter/World War II Home Front National Historic Park.

David's assistance, calm presence and sense of fun will be missed. We wish him well in his new post as the Chief of Cultural Affairs, and in his new life on the East Coast.

Become a Member!  
Volunteer!

Feel good about helping the planet by helping the John Muir Association. Your membership and donations support our work. And if you have a few hours, or more, spend them with us! Help out at special events—or help plan them. Please give us a call at (925) 229-3857.

**Yes!** I want to continue John Muir's legacy as a member of the John Muir Association.

Your donation to the John Muir Association supports our mission to celebrate and share the life, work and spirit of John Muir through programs focusing on education, preservation, advocacy, and stewardship of the John Muir National Historic Site.

The John Muir Association is an IRS 501(c)(3) organization; donations to JMA are tax deductible.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Benefactor</b>   | \$1,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Family/Joint</b> | \$50 |
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**Please mail this form and your tax-deductible donation to:**

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P.O. Box 2433  
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## John Muir NHS Hosts Staff from Muir's Birthplace

By David Blackburn

A bridge between John Muir's hometown in Dunbar, Scotland and his home in Martinez, California became stronger with the help of a recent visitor. The John Muir National Historic Site hosted Pauline Smeed, one of three full-time employees at the John Muir Birthplace in Dunbar. She visited from April 10 to May 18 this year.



Pauline Smeed presented information to JMA Board Members about John Muir's life growing up in Dunbar and the new interpretive center at Muir's birthplace

opportunities to share ideas concerning education, interpretive programming and operations.

Smeed's schedule was quite full during her stay. She made informative presentations on Muir's Dunbar and the new Muir interpretive center at the birthplace to park staff and the John Muir Association Board of Directors. She had a chance to visit the Muir collection at the University of the Pacific in Stockton as well as give

presentations for the University's life-long learning program. She even helped out at the John Muir Birthday–Earth Day Celebration. Smeed took advantage of the archives at the John Muir NHS to bring copies of materials from Martinez back to Scotland.

The exchange was a great success. Pauline left with a much clearer idea of the operations and resources at John Muir NHS and the staff was inspired by what the staff at the birthplace has achieved in a short time. To reciprocate the exchange, the NPS hopes to send a staff member from John Muir NHS to the John Muir Birthplace in 2008.

*Editor's Note: Visit the John Muir Birthplace Trust at [www.jmbt.org.uk](http://www.jmbt.org.uk) to learn more about Muir's Dunbar home.*

The exchange of staff is key to strengthening the more formal relationship between the John Muir NHS in Martinez and Muir's birthplace. Such exchanges build stronger ties to both Muir organizations and provides staff from each site to learn about Muir through a different perspective. These exchanges also provide



P.O. Box 2433  
Martinez, CA 94553

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## An Invitation to...

### The John Muir Conservation Award Dinner

**J**oin us for the John Muir Conservation Award Dinner on Sunday, January 20 for an inspiring evening. The John Muir Association is presenting its award for the 30th consecutive year. Highlights include a gourmet dinner, delicious Muir-Hanna wines and Anderson Valley Brewing Company beers. The dinner will be held at the Campbell Theatre in Martinez.

This year, the award has been expanded and will be given in

four categories instead of just one: Conservationist of the Year, Environmental Education Conservation Award, Nonprofit Conservation Award and Business Conservation Award. For details about the award and previous winners, visit [www.johnmuirassociation.org](http://www.johnmuirassociation.org).

Since 1978, the John Muir Association has honored those who work to continue John Muir's legacy of environmental preservation. Past award recipients include Gary



Bogue of the *Contra Costa Times*; Garrett Burke, the designer of California's state quarter; and Congressman George Miller.

Please reserve your tickets early, as seating is limited. Tickets are \$80 per person; all proceeds will benefit JMA. To register, or for information, call (925) 229-3857.

## Important Dates to Remember

John Muir Conservation Award Dinner

Sunday, January 20, 2008

John Muir Earth Day Celebration

Saturday, April 19, 2008